

Message Text

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CINCPAC

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 7205

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJECT: GOI WARNS AGAINST BHASHANI'S MARCH ON FARAKKA

1. THE DELHI PRESS MAY 14 FRONT-PAGES THE GOI'S WARNING TO THE BDG ABOUT THE MAY 16 MARCH ON FARAKKA WHICH MAULANA BHASHANI IS ORGANIZING. HEADLINES READ: " DACCA TOLD TO ENSURE PEACE ON THE BORDER" ("NATIONAL HERALD"); "DACCA ASKED TO STOP MOB PLAN TO DESTROY FARAKKA" ("PATRIOT"); "DELHI ASKS TO HALT BHASHANI'S MARCH TO DEMOLISH FARAKKA" ("INDIAN EXPRESS"). THE "STATESMAN" AND "PATRIOT" CARRIED THE FOLLOWING AS THE OFFICIAL GOI STATEMENT:

(A) BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSIONER SHAMSUR RAHMAN WAS CALLED TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON THURSDAY AND TOLD OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S REGRET AND CONCERN AT THE FAILURE OF THE BANGLADESH AUTHORITIES TO CHECK INFLAMMATORY PROPAGANDA AGAINST INDIA OVER FARAKKA WHICH HAD UNNECESSARILY AROUSED
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PASSIONS IN BANGLADESH AND FOSTERED ILL-WILL AND HOSTILITY

TOWARDS INDIA. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER WAS TOLD THAT WHILST THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA CAN ONLY DEPLORE THE HOSTILE PROPAGANDA THEY CANNOT BUT TAKE A SERIOUS VIEW OF REPORTS OF ATTEMPTS TO UNLEASH MOB FURY AND VIOLENCE IMPLICIT IN THE THREATENED MARCH TOWARDS FARAKKA ON THE 16 MAY FROM ACROSS THE BORDER.

(B) THE HIGH COMMISSIONER WAS ASKED TO URGE HIS GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY MEASURES TO PREVENT VIOLATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BORDER AS WELL AS ANY OTHER ACTIONS PREJUDICIAL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF FRIENDLY AND GOOD-NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

(C) THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAVE ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO THE BORDER AUTHORITIES THAT VIOLATION OF THE BORDER IS TO BE PREVENTED IN THE INTERESTS OF MAINTAINING TRANQUILITY AND ORDER IN THE AREA. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WOULD CONTINUE TO ACT WITH THE UTMOST RESTRAINT AND WITH A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY BUT WOULD HOPE THAT UNNECESSARY PROVOCATION AND VIOLENCE BY IRRESPONSIBLE OR LAWLESS ELEMENTS IN BANGLADESH WOULD BE PREVENTED BY THE BANGLADESH AUTHORITIES.

(D) THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE EARNEST EFFORTS TO SEEK AN EXPEDITIOUS SETTLEMENT OF THE ALLOCATION OF THE LEAN SEASON FLOWS OF THE GANGA THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS IN A SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION, SAFEGUARDING THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES.

(E) AS PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI IN A RECENT LETTER TO MAULANA MOHD ABDUL HAMID KHAN BHASHANI, WHO HAS THREATENED TO LEAD A MARCH ON 16 MAY TO "DEMOLISH" FARAKKA POINTED OUT: " BETWEEN NEIGHBOURS, PROBLEMS ARE APT TO ARISE SOMETIMES. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT SOLUTIONS SHOULD BE SOUGHT IN A SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION. WE CAN ONLY HARM EACH OTHER BY PURSUING A PATH OF CONFRONTATION AND HOSTILITY.. OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE RESUMED DISCUSSIONS ON THE ALLOCATIONS OF THE GANGA FLOWS DURING THE LEAN SEASON AND RELATED QUESTIONS. THIS EFFORT NEEDS ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

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OF ALL PERSONS OF GOODWILL ON BOTH SIDES.

(F) WE ARE OPEN TO PERSUASION AND REASONED ARGUMENT BUT NO ONE SHOULD REALLY EXPECT INDIA TO SUBMIT TO THREATS OR OTHER PALPABLY UNREASONABLE OR UNJUSTIFIED DEMANDS."

(G) IT MAY BE RECALLED THAT AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL AND

FRIENDSHIP THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON 27 MARCH HAD VOLUNTARILY REDUCED THE FLOW INTO THE FARAKKA FEEDER CANAL BELOW THE MINIMUM QUANTITY REQUIRED FOR FLUSHING THE HOOGHLY.

(H) MEANWHILE, THE FLOW INTO BANGLADESH HAS BEEN INCREASED FURTHER BY A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT DURING THE CURRENT LEAN SEASON. THIS FACT IS KNOWN TO THE HIGH-LEVEL TECHNICAL DELEGATION FROM BANGLADESH WHICH HAD VISITED FARAKKA ON 9 MAY.

2. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST REPORT TO OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE GO'S CLAIM THAT IT HAS FURTHER REDUCED ITS OFFTAKE OF FARAKKA WATERS.SAXBE

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